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FIRST IN THE
WORLD-HERALD

Aksarben’s king and queen are history

Tradition dating to 1895
ends, but organization’s
mission, annual ball live on

By Emily Nohr

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

A king and queen will no longer reign over the mythical kingdom of Quivira as part of the annual Aksarben celebration.

Officials from the Aksarben Foundation announced the change in a letter to former members of an Aksarben-related women’s committee this week.

“We will be retiring the tradition of crowning a king and queen,” wrote Kirk Kellner, chairman of the Aksarben Board of Governors, in a letter obtained by The World-Herald.

But the organization’s mission will largely remain the same, he wrote, with an annual ball that continues to honor individuals and families for their community service.

“We will raise money for need-based scholarships, community grants and initiatives to further workforce development,” Kellner wrote. “Money raised at the Ball will continue to benefit many people throughout the Heartland.”

The philanthropic organization’s board, which includes more than a dozen CEOs, presidents and people in other high-level positions, approved the royalty change and some others, including the name

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CITY COUNCIL

Unlimited yard waste pickup high on wish list

Members’ feedback to
mayor on trash contract
also focuses on cart size

By Emily Nohr

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

Members of the Omaha City Council are asking Mayor Jean Stothert’s administration to reconsider limiting yard waste pickup under the next waste collection contract.

They’re also urging the administration to consider allowing people to choose their cart size right away.

City Council President Ben Gray sent a letter to Public Works Director Bob Stubbe last week based on a number of suggestions and questions from council members.

“The letter is a compilation of thoughts by council members,” Gray said. “Some (ideas) might rise to a higher level than others.”

Stothert said she wanted the council’s feedback as the city works to develop the parameters of the next contract.

Omaha is the only city in Nebraska required by state law to provide waste collection service without imposing a separate fee. The city’s current contract, which

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ELSIE STORMBERG/THE WORLD-HERALD

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN

HUSKER SPORTS FUND SCHOLARSHIPS FOR OTHERS

By Rick Ruggles

WORLD-HERALD STAFF WRITER

LINCOLN — A new \$5 million Husker athletic department scholarship program for non-athletes appears to be a home run for University of Nebraska-Lincoln enrollment.

The money, provided for fall enrollment, has enabled UNL to offer scholarships to about 3,000 prospective students, said Amber Williams, assistant vice chancellor for enrollment management at UNL.

“That’s a big deal,” Williams said this week. “There’s just something really special about what’s going on here.”

The University of Nebraska system would grow by more than 1,465 students in the fall if it meets goals described Thursday in the NU Board of Regents’ packet.

Enrollment growth is a vital element as higher education institutions in Nebraska and elsewhere battle state budget cuts. Cuts in Iowa, Kansas and Missouri have prompted universities in the region to aggressive-

\$5 million from athletic
department helps 3,000
non-athletes, furthers
enrollment goals



Students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln on Thursday. If the NU system’s campuses reach their goals, fall enrollment would grow by 2.8 percent.

ly seek out-of-state students.

NU leaders recorded campus enrollment goals for 2018-19 in strategic planning documents. They weren’t discussed at the meeting.

The documents cited the following targets:

» University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2.9 percent increase, which would put enrollment at about 26,835.

» University of Nebraska at Omaha, 4.5 percent increase, putting enrollment at about 16,440.

» University of Nebraska at Kearney, any increase over last year’s 6,644.

» University of Nebraska Med Center, any increase over last year’s 3,908.

NU President Hank Bounds has stressed the need to grow and did so again in a statement early this week.

“Frankly, we’re not growing enough,” Bounds said. “Business leaders tell us over and over that workforce development is their No. 1 issue.”

NU spokeswoman Melissa Lee said these goals have been mentioned in previous regents’ packets. Now is

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PHIL JOHNSON/THE WORLD-HERALD

Bye-bye, Bam Bam

To free up space for an exhibit, zoo is sending its lone polar bear to Kansas City. **Living**

Husker aide preaches pep

NU offensive coordinator Troy Walters isn’t just teaching plays, but a mindset. **Sports**

Weather

High: 57 Low: 39
Partly sunny
Details: 6B

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NEBRASKA LEGISLATURE

Prison overcrowding bill wouldn’t do much, some say

Proposal moves ahead,
but with half of its original
provisions removed

By Paul Hammel

WORLD-HERALD BUREAU

LINCOLN — A much-amended bill aimed at addressing the state’s chronic prison overcrowding was revived from the dead on Thursday, but at least two senators say its impact will be modest at best.

The bill, addressing one of the state’s biggest and most nagging problems, puts a Dec. 1 deadline on a report that’s already being prepared, changes the name of a parole department and requires

a more expanded look at prison staffing needs.

About half of the provisions of Legislative Bill 841 were stripped out via amendment at the request of the Ricketts administration before lawmakers gave it first-round approval on a 37-1 vote on Thursday.

“Pablum” is how State Sen. Patty Pansing Brooks of Lincoln described what was left in the bill.

“It’s just a very innocuous bill,” she said.

Crete Sen. Laura Ebke, who heads the legislative committee that crafted the proposal, said “huge things” were lacking.

“It’s not going to be earth-shattering, but it will at least remind

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